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United States Department of Agriculture,

BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,

Seed and Plant Introduction and Distribution,

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SCARLET VETCH (*Vicia fulgens*).

Scarlet vetch is an annual legume and in a general way is similar to common vetch, but more upright in habit. It is somewhat less hardy than common vetch, but is adapted as a winter crop to the Pacific coast and the Southern States. In other parts of the country it should be tested only as a spring-sown crop. As yet scarlet vetch has been grown but little in this country, but it should be given comparative trial with common vetch wherever the latter is grown.

Sowing.—The seed weighs 60 pounds to the bushel. It is at present somewhat expensive, but it is believed that if the demand arises it can be grown as cheaply as common vetch. It may be sown broadcast or may be drilled at the rate of from 4 to 6 pecks per acre. Scarlet vetch stands well without the support of any grain crop. When desired, however, one-half bushel of oats, wheat, or other small grain may be sown with 1 bushel of the vetch seed.

Harvesting.—The proper time to cut for hay is after a portion of the pods have become well developed, but before any of the seed has matured. Like common vetch and hairy vetch, it is usually cut with a mowing machine. For this purpose it is desirable to have an iron rod fastened at the end of the cutter bar, tipping upward and slightly forward. The tops of the vetch plants are drawn downward by the iron rod to where they are cut by the machine knives, and thus the swath which is being cut is separated from the uncut vetch. The vetch should be placed in cocks before the leaves have become dry. If allowed to become too dry before placing in the cock, a large portion of the leaves may be broken off.

When scarlet vetch is to be harvested for seed a great deal of care must be used or the larger part of the crop may be lost by the shattering of the pods. The best time to harvest for seed is probably soon after the first pods have become thoroughly ripe; for after the pods once begin to shatter, ripe seed may be lost more rapidly than the green seed will mature. Each swath should be moved out of the way of the horses and machine wheels before the next one is cut. The vetch should be piled in cocks before the vines have become thoroughly dried or the seed begins to shatter. It should be disturbed as little as possible before it is thrashed.

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